CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 27 August 1992, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Michel Servais (Belgium)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I declare open the 634th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

First of all I wish to welcome very warmly, on behalf of the Conference, Ambassador Aarno Karhilo, the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, who has already honoured us with his presence on several occasions. His statement to the Conference today bears witness to the important contribution Finland makes to our work, particularly as regards the negotiations on chemical weapons. I am convinced, Sir, that we will all follow your statement with very special interest.

On the list of speakers today I have the representatives of New Zealand, Finland, Peru, France, Mexico, Egypt, Pakistan, Morocco, Norway, Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Bisley.

Mr. BISLEY (New Zealand): Mr. President, the CD session that is drawing to a close has been significant, and it gives me great pleasure at seeing you in the Chair at this time. You have the honour of overseeing the passage of the 1992 report of the Conference, a report to which will be annexed the draft chemical weapons convention (CWC). It is to that convention that I would like to devote my initial remarks.

New Zealand's commitment to the conclusion of a comprehensive convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction is a matter of record. We have supported negotiations to that end, by this Conference, since 1968. New Zealand does not, and has never, possessed chemical weapons. We have no intention of ever doing so.

At the Paris Conference in 1989 we withdrew our reservation to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, thereby renouncing any use of chemical weapons as a method of warfare. We did so because we could not envisage any situation in which the use of these weapons could be warranted. We are pleased that others have taken a similar step. The 1925 Protocol fulfilled an important role in addressing the problems of chemical weapons. But it was not comprehensive and, as events of recent years have demonstrated clearly, it was not in itself sufficient to ensure that such weapons were not used again. We are confident that the new chemical weapons convention will be a far stronger and more effective instrument.

The draft which the chemical weapons Ad Hoc Committee, only last evening, agreeed to transmit to this plenary, and which must now go forward to the United Nations General Assembly, represents an enormous effort by a good number of dedicated and talented professionals. I am sure I will be only the first of a long list of speakers this morning to congratulate Ambassador von Wagner on his efforts during the final, intensive, phase of these negotiations. He and the team he gathered around him have done a job of which they can be justly proud, and for which all of us can be extremely grateful.

(Mr. Bisley, New Zealand)

The conclusion of the chemical weapons convention has undoubtedly been helped by the new and improved international climate. But it is worth noting that the convention was largely negotiated during a period of threat and confrontation in world affairs. That was partly why the negotiations were spread over such a long time. Although they took so long, the fact that they continued throughout the difficult years of the cold war demonstrated the determination of the international community to eliminate the threat of chemical weapons.

Not all countries which have worked towards a chemical weapons convention, whether as members or non-members of the CD, agree with every clause or article of the draft. But that is the nature of international negotiations. We are all impelled by the desire to banish chemical weapons, but given the different concerns which inevitably exist among so many different States, a spirit of compromise and consensus is essential in the pursuit of our goal. That spirit has been very much in evidence in the past weeks.

The text now going forward is comprehensive. Development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons are dealt with in detail. S too is destruction. States undertake never to use chemical weapons under any circumstances. For many this is simply a reiteration of their commitment under the 1925 Protocol. But in its range, and particularly in the area of intrusive verification, the convention contributes to and consolidates new ideas about what the international community is coming to require as a part of effective arms control. The principles in this convention will become an accepted part of the world's norms in controlling proliferation.

New Zealand is not a member of this Conference, but we have sought to contribute to its work, both here in Geneva and closer to home in the Asia-Pacific region. We have joined partners in regional seminars over the course of the last two or three years to prepare for the chemical weapons convention and to urge unanimous support when it is open for signature. We have undertaken a national trial inspection and begun preparatory steps so as to be ready to fulfil the commitments required.

We are strongly of the view that this convention serves the interests of national - and international - security. Accordingly we in New Zealand join others endorsing the text and commending it to the international community. In fact, we would have been perfectly happy to do this in the Ad Hoc Committee last evening had it been possible for non-members of the Conference on Disarmament to take this step. We will in any case co-sponsor a resolution supporting the convention at the United Nations General Assembly. We are taking steps to ensure that New Zealand will be an original signatory when the convention is opened for signature in Paris in January next year.

The final negotiations and the next steps towards signature and ratification of the chemical weapons convention are taking place in an international atmosphere much less heavy with suspicion and distrust than in the earlier years of this Conference's work. Other significant steps forward

(Mr. Bisley, New Zealand)

have been taken. Sweeping cuts to nuclear arsenals have been made by the two most heavily armed States. Even more drastic ones are planned. Nuclear testing is being reduced, and in two cases unilateral moratoriums are in place. Mutual confidence and cooperation are replacing mutual deterrence as the underpinning of global security.

The cold war has gone, but unfortunately its effects are still being felt. At its height it hampered in some parts of the world the normal processes of adjustment and shared development which would have enabled neighbouring ethnic groups to share in the world's increased prosperity since the Second World War. Instead we are confronted with areas of grave tension, of which the conflict in the former Yugoslavia is among the worst. Such tension cannot be dissipated overnight, and will require political will, first and foremost on the part of those most immediately involved. Faced with such tragedies the United Nations is seeking to establish a new and vital role for itself in peace-making as well as peace-keeping.

In such circumstances, and with its 20-year period of negotiation on a chemical weapons convention now over, this Conference must also consider its own role. For the last five years chemical weapons has been the Conference on Disarmament's major item. To be quite frank, it has been the only substantive item the Conference has considered in recent times. As we congratulate ourselves on the CWC outcome, we must also ask what we will devote our time and energy to in the future. This is not the occasion to consider in detail the answer to that question, just as we are at the stage of launching into the wider world the product of many years' labour. But we will need, at the Conference on Disarmament's next session, to explore fully the continuing responsibilities we have, and ways of giving substance and form to our deliberation on them. This is not just a long-term, or an academic, question. All of us have to justify to our Governments the resources allocated to various aspects of our Geneva operations. There are, as always, competing demands for staff time. Once the chemical weapons item is removed from its agenda, the Conference on Disarmament can no longer lay automatic claim to those resources to the extent it does so now.

There is no doubt that on most other issues, for example radiological weapons, NSAs, and outer space, interesting work is being done. Ad hoc committees are either involved in negotiations or, where political differences prevent this, conducting "preliminary work". But in no instance am I able to report to my Government that such substantive progress is being made as warrants New Zealand's full participation in those committees.

A new item on the agenda this year is that of transparency in armaments. New Zealand co-sponsored resolution 46/36 L, which accorded the Conference a particular role in this area, and we will of course maintain an active and positive interest in the consideration of the issue. But that resolution gave an expert group primary carriage of the subject; and indeed that subject does not in itself provide full-time work for a Conference with the CD's wide-ranging mandate.

(Mr. Bisley, New Zealand)

It is of course true that included within the Conference on Disarmament's mandate is consideration of what many believe to be three fundamental nuclear issues. On two of them not even preliminary work has been agreed. And on the third, the item on a nuclear test ban, the Ad Hoc Committee has met for only 18 months in the past 9 years.

Last year New Zealand introduced in the United Nations General Assembly First Committee a resolution urging the re-establishment of the Committee in 1992 and requesting it to intensify its substantive work. That resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority, reflecting the international community's conviction in the value of a CTB as an arms control and non-proliferation measure. That the Comittee has not been re-established this year was therefore a great disappointment to New Zealand. We hope, indeed expect, that delegations will find the flexibility necessary to advance this issue early next year.

We hope for much from the Committee, not just because of our national position on the responsibility of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of the CTB treaty, but also because abrogation of that responsibility would signal the Conference on Disarmament's inability to build on its chemical weapons success in a positive way. It would signal a loss of direction, and lead many to question the viability of the Conference on Disarmament and the continuing need for this kind of multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

For these reasons, New Zealand will, with others, be promoting at this year's United Nations General Assembly a resolution drawing attention again to the Conference on Disarmament's particular responsibilities in the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. If these responsibilities are shirked, we fear for both the objective of a CTB, and for the Conference itself. A Conference which does not substantively address an issue as important to many as that of nuclear testing leaves itself open to critical scrutiny by Governments, and by the world community.

Others here know better than I that the Conference on Disarmament was established in a different era, with a membership reflecting a different world, a world facing different problems. The Conference has over the years gone through a series of incarnations, each designed to keep apace with this changing world.

Recent changes in the world are such that the time is ripe to consider again how the Conference on Disarmament should adapt to the future. 1993 will be telling in this regard. In facing up to that challenge the Conference on Disarmament must consider the issue of its membership so that membership is not another stumbling-block to the CD's relevance in the post-cold-war era. What is clear is that in today's climate all of us - members and non-members alike - will wish to scrutinize afresh the Conference on Disarmament's approach to its task. In this regard, the Conference's recent decision to permit non-members to observe Ambassador Kamal's informal consultations

(Mr. Bisley, New Zealand)

on improved and effective functioning was a major step forward. We note that you, Mr. President, will be conducting follow-up consultations, inter-sessionally, on the specific questions of agenda and membership. Like other non-members, I look forward to discussing these subjects with you.

In this increasingly multipolar world, an ineffective multilateral disarmament negotiating body serves none of us. We owe it to ourselves, and to this Conference, to build on the success of the CWC negotiations. It would be ironic, and disappointing, if the Conference on Disarmament were, on the contrary, to be marginalized by that success. It lies in our hands to ensure that that does not happen.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of New Zealand for his statement and his kind words addressed to Ambassador von Wagner, Chairman of the Committee on Chemical Weapons. I now give the floor to the representative of Finland, Ambassador Karhilo, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

Mr. KARHILO (Finland): Mr. President, it gives me great satisfaction to be able to speak at the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament today under your presidency. This session has been truly historic. The negotiations on the chemical weapons convention have been completed. A process that has lasted for more than 20 years comes to a successful conclusion in the very near future.

The conclusion of the chemical weapons convention, it seems to us, also brings to an end one era in the history of this Conference. In order to safeguard the CWC process, the profound changes in the world have been kept, to a large extent, outside of this chamber. Now it is the time to open the doors again and to see what consequences the changed world may bring to the CD.

These two topics will be the main subjects of my intervention today.

The history of the chemical weapons negotiations is characterized by a seemingly unending sequence of periods of high hopes and periods of almost total frustration. Many a negotiator has left Geneva with a conviction that the process will never end. And their conviction was well founded, but fortunately, as we see now, the reality has taken another course. That course has not, however, been easy to adopt. In order to reach the stage where we are today all participants have had to make hard decisions concerning concessions on important issues of principle and to set the priorities and preferences in their proper order. It has been a difficult task for all of us, not least because of the accelerated pace at which the negotiations have advanced during this year. We all have been assisted in this process, willingly or through friendly persuasion by our Chairman, Ambassador von Wagner. With his Chairman's texts he has given us guidance on what is achievable and what is not. Without his determination and that of his whole team, the visions of a never-ending process might well have become true.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

It is with regret that we have to note, however, that it seems that not all of the participants in the negotiations can join in full support of the convention text. At least not at this point in time. That is a serious shortcoming in our efforts. But it is not the end of the world. It is not even unprecedented in the history of the Conference. On the contrary, it has been more of a rule than an exception that there is no consensus on the final outcome of the negotiations. That has not hindered in the past consensus on the transmittal of the outcome to the General Assembly and the opening of the agreements for signature. We strongly hope that this pattern will prevail.

As is known already, the final text of the convention is in various parts considerably different from what Finland had thought should be achieved in such a treaty. As is true with many other delegations, the main disappointments in the text from our point of view are to be found in the parts dealing with verification. There our main concerns are centred on the overall effectivness and objectivity of the regime. The verification system for us has always been the final guarantee that the increased security brought about by the convention is real. We hope that the CWC verification regime proves to be in practice both the deterrent against violations and the evidence-gathering mechanism that it is meant to be.

The principal focus of Finland's contribution to these negotiations has been technical and scientific. Some of this input is visible in the text of the convention. Some of it will fall under the purview of the preparatory commission's work. Our main objective in this respect has been to conserve scientific precision and objectivity whenever science is applied in the implementation of the convention. That is to say that the science that is being applied should rather be called analytical chemistry than political chemistry.

At the same time we of course recognize that analytical chemistry is not the only tool for the verification of the chemical weapons convention. It is one of many and its usefulness depends on many factors. At best it can, however, be the tool to produce unambiguous evidence on violations.

No treaty is perfect. Even with its deficiencies the chemical weapons convention is a remarkable achievement. It means substantial progress in international security. It includes major innovative provisions. It constitutes a major step in the endeavour to eradicate weapons of mass destruction. The time to conclude the convention was now. Consequences of a failure to do so would have risked the convention altogether. Therefore, Finland associates itself with the statement made by France, joined by several other delegations yesterday at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, which is reflected in the Committee's report.

During the last year or so it has been heartening to notice that the demand for full sets of the Finnish Blue Books has increased. A clear sign that the approaching end to the negotiations has not gone unnoticed by the laboratories that may seek to have a function related to the convention. As to our own laboratory, I can repeat the pledge made a couple of years ago that its competence will be at the full service of the organization.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The setting up of the necessary laboratory network for the organization is one of the tasks that the preparatory commission should embark upon at an early stage of its work. The accreditation process will take time. But it ensures that highly skilled personnel in well-equipped laboratories follow strict quality assurance procedures as required for such a network. And accreditation has to be completed before the entry into force of the convention.

Another practical preparatory operation that cannot be delayed is the training of inspectors. Several countries are already offering or plannig to offer training programmes that are of relevance to the CWC. However, at the moment there are no guidelines for these countries as to the contents of the training programmes. It is in the interest of both the organizers of these programmes and the participants that the programmes conform to the needs of the organization to the maximum extent possible, that they do not overlap unnecessarily, and that they form logical parts of the overall training scheme.

From our own experience with training we can conclude that the skills needed during an inspection are so varied and the required depth of specialization so great that in practice it will be impossible that all of them could be accumulated by one person, the inspector. Rather, the organization will need trained specialists in several aspects of inspections. Consequently the inspection team will have to be composed of the specialists needed to fulfil a certain inspection mandate. This fact will naturally have to be reflected in the training programmes. There is no need to try to include everything in one single programme, but rather one can concentrate the programmes on a certain skill or skills and increase the depth of training in those. The programmes should be focused. And they should be focused on relevant matters in a relevant manner.

At the same time coordination between the programme organizers is very important. In order to optimize the utilization of scarce resources duplication of efforts should be avoided. And it is as important that one should try to make sure that all the relevant aspects will be covered by training programmes.

A lot of work has to be done in this field. We have been glad to notice that a growing number of delegations have started to discuss these issues and that voluntary coordination and background work among the organizers is being developed.

The conclusion of the chemical weapons convention immediately brings into mind thoughts on the future work of the Conference on Disarmament. Important statements have already been made in this room about the prospects for the future. All of the speakers have in one form or another also referred to the possibility of an end to the CD altogether. That clearly shows that the issue is serious.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

The Conference on Disarmament is, by definition, a negotiating body. But do we actually know what that definition means or should mean in today's world? Indeed, what should the products of this kind of a body look like in order to respond to the actual security needs of countries? The perceptions of the role of the CD and its products tend to date from the cold war era and the then prevailing threats. A possibility of a war between the two military alliances and its different devastating aspects was a significant security concern for practically all countries. Therefore, the agendas of global disarmament forums focused on topics that would help in decreasing those threats.

Today the world is radically different from only a few years ago. So are the immediate threat perceptions of many countries. For some the situation is much more secure than before. For some it is more insecure. A decrease in global tension has in many places given room for increased local tensions which for the countries in question may have had adverse effects on their security. Some old security issues have been given new dimensions and importance in the new world. All non-proliferation issues belong to that category. Then there are totally new security issues which have emerged into the limelight during the last years - for example the safe handling, storage and disposal of weapons systems. And all these new issues affecting the security of individual countries, regions and the world as a whole are in obvious ways interconnected.

As in the past during the cold war era the countries most directly involved and affected may well achieve some good results which have global dimensions. However, the nature of many of the new threats and security concerns call for wider participation by the international community in their solution. But even so, should those solutions take the form of global conventions of the CWC type for example? Or should we rather think in terms of more limited documents and agreements? Are the security needs of countries better served by reactions to topical issues with restricted dimensions than by near-eternal negotiations on very complex conventions or on topics where no progress is achieved?

We need to think that by lowering the target levels we may gain in meaningful achievements. And by relieving resources from stagnated processes to new spheres of activity a greater number of concerns are given the chance to be addressed adequately.

In reviewing the agenda and the programme of work of the Conference the practical implication of these ideas is twofold. First, it should be assessed whether it is useful to continue with the general target of each item or more useful to concentrate on a restricted, concrete subitem or another type of product than hitherto conceived as the aim of the process. Secondly one should assess whether the time and effort spent on each item would be better utilized for a new topic altogether given the realistic prospects for achievement.

(Mr. Karhilo, Finland)

Apart from the agenda there is also another feature of the CD which no longer reflects the realities of the world. That is the composition of the Conference. Throughout its history the composition of this Conference has carefully followed the political balances of the world. Today the political balance that determined the composition of the CD in 1979 is no longer valid. What this could and should mean to the CD was very aptly pointed out by Ambassador Hyltenius on 23 July.

The changes that have taken place in the world have also changed the essence of many of the issues. The issues are also increasingly becoming multifaceted. They do not follow the historically customary balancing lines. And they should not be artificially forced to do so. An attempt to maintain an obsolete balance or to create a new equilibrium will do just that.

The exact number of members or participants does not seem to be a real issue. The negotiating history of the chemical weapons convention shows that an annually increasing number of participants did not make the process more difficult. The benefits of having had a large number of observers participating in the process will become apparent between now and the entry into force of the convention. When the product of a treaty negotiation is presented to the international community for signature, it is beneficial to have a large part of that community already as supporters of the outcome. They are the ones that make any treaty a universal one, not the limited number of negotiators.

In conclusion it seems therefore very important to give all those countries that are able and willing to contribute to the negotiations an equal chance of doing so on the subjects that are most important to them. The idea of opening the Conference on Disarmament to all States which apply for membership seems to us well worth pursuing. We tend to agree that the number of participants would in that case increase, but in a rather modest fashion. One way of keeping the total number of members relatively low is to maintain, even in that formula, the possibility of following the negotiations as an observer. It would then be up to the States themselves to decide how they would like to participate in the Conference.

The exchange of views on the future agenda and composition of the Conference will begin very soon in the form of informal consultations of the President of the Conference. We have been very pleased to note that it is your intention, Mr. President, to seek during this phase also the opinions and views of observer countries. This procedure we understand as a recognition of the fact that the future of this Conference depends not only on the members but on a larger group of active and interested countries.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Karhilo of Finland for his statement, and for his words of encouragement and the extremely interesting suggestions he made. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru, Ambassador de Rivero.

Mr. de RIVERO (Peru) (translated from Spanish): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to convey to you the great satisfaction my delegation feels at seeing you presiding over the Conference at this time of the year when very important work is coming to a conclusion. You may be sure of our support. We have every confidence in your drive and patience, which are a guarantee of success. I should also like to express my best wishes to the Ambassador of Italy, Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso, in the discharge of his new and important responsibilities which await him in Rome; likewise to Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, who has also been summoned by his Government for important duties in Buenos Aires. Similarly my delegation warmly welcomes the Ambassadors of Sri Lanka and Poland, whom we wish a happy stay in this city together with their respective families.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, under the gifted leadership of the Ambassador of Germany, Adolf von Wagner, has just made a substantial contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security with the conclusion of the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. This achievement, which will prove to be a landmark in the history of disarmament, was made possible by the convergence of the political will of the States represented here and the undeniable skill displayed by Ambassador von Wagner and his delegation when they chose the path which made it possible gradually to strike a consensus on those substantive issues which were still pending and were difficult.

The convention on chemical weapons, the first of its kind in its scope and complexity, negotiations on which have finally been concluded, constitutes an extensive exercise in cooperation and solidarity among the States parties for the purpose of achieving the elimination of these horrific weapons of mass destruction once and for all. In this regard, and with this conviction, we know that this convention builds upon the precedent set by the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. And bright prospects are undoubtedly opening up for the realization of nuclear disarmament, including the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, in the not too distant future.

Although Peru's decision to be an original signatory of the convention is well known, I should like to take this opportunity to place on record my country's full support for the draft convention contained in document CD/CW/WP.400/Rev.2. It is no secret to anyone that the draft convention contains the minimum that is acceptable to the vast majority of delegations. But it is this very common denominator which made it possible for the Ad Hoc Committee to accomplish in full the task entrusted to it.

Peru's expectations were of course greater, as no doubt were those of many other member States of this Conference. Nevertheless, the draft convention embodies the concessions that the member States had to make to one another, all of them guided by the sole objective of eliminating chemical weapons from the face of the Earth.

(Mr. de Rivero, Peru)

My delegation could make many observations on the draft convention at the end of this negotiating process. For the moment I will restrict myself to making only a few such observations, relating to some aspects of its content. In the first place, it might perhaps have been desirable to update the preamble, which dates for the most part from 1985, in order to bring it into line with the scope of the general obligations set out in article I.

Second, we consider that the definitions and criteria in article II are consistent with the prohibitions appearing in article I. Even though the definition of chemical weapons displays a degree of latitude, we proceed from the assumption that good faith on the part of the States parties will prevent possible combinations of circumstances from being readily confused with an alleged intention to flout obligations entered into under the convention. At all events, in the interests of safety it would appear preferable to have a degree of flexibility in interpretation rather than a narrow definition which might be overtaken in the future by ceaseless technological development, particularly in the field of non-lethal chemicals.

Third, it is true that if law enforcement is not referred to as "domestic", as in article II, paragraph 9 (d), this might give rise to far-fetched interpretations going beyond what the negotiators intended. Consequently, my delegation considers it appropriate to point out that as far as Peru is concerned law enforcement is within the competence of each geographical State, except for activities that might be carried out by United Nations peace-keeping forces.

Fourth, in Peru's view the good faith of the States possessing chemical weapons will be judged by the way in which they implement their general plans for the destruction of their stockpiles; it would be desirable for the destruction of chemical weapons to be effected more rapidly, except in the cases specified in part IV (A), paragraph 21 of the annex on implementation and verification. We continue to regard it as regrettable that States will be under the obligation to destroy only 45 per cent of their chemical weapons by the end of the seventh year of the destruction process, especially since this appears to prejudge the extension of the destruction period for five more years, as referred to in part IV (A), paragraph 24. This is why my delegation attaches particular importance to the principle set forth in article IV, paragraph 16, regarding the obligation of a State possessing chemical weapons also to meet the costs of verification of storage and destruction of such weapons, unless the executive council decides otherwise.

Fifth, the provisions of article VI, in the view of experts, restrict the scope of verification of world chemical industry. Of course, it was in no one's mind to cover the whole of this dynamic productive industrial sector, since verification would have been unmanageable and exorbitantly costly. Yet it was thought to be possible to cover more than 30 per cent of "capable facilities". In the end, the objectives of the convention proved to be more modest, either because thresholds were raised or because it focused solely on "PSF facilities".

(Mr. de Rivero, Peru)

Sixth, the agreed composition of the executive council was not the happiest solution for Latin America and the Caribbean. We accepted the agreement as the best way of stimulating greater involvement, particularly by Africa, among the original signatories. Yet at the same time we attach particular importance to article VIII, paragraph 25, under which, as soon as the destruction of chemical weapons and production facilities has been completed, the conference may, at the request of a majority of the members of the executive council, review the composition of the council, taking into account developments related to the principles specified in paragraph 23.

Seventh, Peru continues to believe that the amendment procedure set out in article XV suffers from the shortcoming that it makes the new convention very rigid, to the point that it might become fossilized through the actions of a single State party which either opposed an amendment or merely decided dramatically to refrain from ratifying it, even after having voted in favour.

Eighth, my delegation welcomes the important statement made by the Ambassador of Australia, Paul O'Sullivan, on behalf of the Australia Group, whereby the member countries of the Group made a commitment to seek to eliminate restrictions on transfers among the States parties. For the same reasons, my delegation welcomes the inclusion in parts VII and VIII of the verification annex of important provisions designed to monitor transfers to States which are not parties to the convention.

Lastly, it is to be hoped that the ban on making reservations to the various articles of the convention will not lead to the unhealthy practice of interpretative declarations. Under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, such declarations must be regarded to all intents and purposes as reservations, and they therefore fall under the ban.

We know that the preparatory commission has an arduous task ahead of it and that the way it addresses and resolves the questions within its competence will determine whether there is a smooth transition to the future international organization. It is therefore advisable to give due advance consideration to its structure and agenda in order to smooth the path to full operation at the beginning of next year.

It is well known that the convention which we have just concluded will be the first significant agreement produced by this sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in 16 years. The problem starting in 1993 therefore will be to what extent it is advisable to restructure the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in order to encourage greater productivity. Are we to set aside the 1978 "Decalogue" in order to modernize the agenda? Or should we seek more pragmatic formulas to make innovations without falling into the temptation of modifying or complicating the topics in the Decalogue? My delegation thinks that the second option appears the most advisable in the present circumstances, since the 1978 Decalogue contains all the issues related to general and complete disarmament under effective international control, which remains the

(Mr. de Rivero, Peru)

ultimate goal pursued by the international community. Consequently, while there must be innovation, this should come about in the annual agenda of the Conference in the light of changing circumstances and a sense of timing, so that it will be perfectly possible to pick out selectively certain specific topics on which the Conference is in a position to negotiate or prepare the ground for the immediate commencement of negotiations. Such a selective and topical approach would enable the Conference on Disarmament to reaffirm its negotiating character, banishing once and for all the tendency to embark on discussions which really belong in the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

We are aware of the work which you, Sir, will have to undertake in the inter-sessional period in connection with this very important subject on the agenda, and I would now like to inform you that my delegation would prefer a shorter, selective agenda focusing on the urgent issues, on the basis of the 1978 Decalogue, in which it would be really possible to commence negotiations with a view to the conclusion of agreements in the future. Addressing topics as complex as nuclear disarmament in a sweeping and global way could simply mean not wishing to do anything about them. In this context, my delegation ventures to propose for 1993 just five topics for the agenda, of which two at least should be the subject of intense negotiations in order to keep up the momentum in this Conference which was achieved with the finalization of the negotiations on the convention on chemical weapons. These specific topics would be as follows.

First of all, a total ban on nuclear tests. On this subject, no member State of this negotiation body should lose sight of the fact that the NPT sets a deadline which will expire without fail in 1995. And that to ensure the indefinite extension of this mulilateral instrument, negotiations must be begun for the suspension of nuclear testing. Therefore in 1993, in the view of my delegation, the Ad Hoc Committee on this question should be re-established with a negotiating mandate and with the additional task of modifying the mandate of the Group of Scientific Experts to take account of the urgent need to devise a verification system which can be applied to this type of prohibition. In saying this, my delegation thanks the Austrian Government for the continued cooperation which it has extended to the Peruvian expert, and believes that only a concerted international effort in this field will enable the Group of Scientific Experts to complete its works rapidly.

Another topic for the agenda would be a protocol on renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons. This is another of the specific topics which my delegation is proposing and which in part falls under present items 2, 3 and 6 of the Conference's agenda. The elimination or withdrawal of tactical and medium-range nuclear weapons from the main theatres in which the cold war was conducted and their use was contemplated has logically resulted in the raising of the thresholds for nuclear reprisals, with the virtual elimination of the "first strike". For that reason we believe that in this Conference, it is now possible, given the presence here of the five nuclear Powers, to commence negotiations on a protocol which will prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. As far as the scope of obligations is concerned, this protocol could perhaps draw

(Mr. de Rivero, Peru)

on the Geneva Protocol of 1925, without of course taking the analogy too far. This should in no way constitute a bar to the immediate consideration of other initiatives to encourage the process of nuclear disarmament.

Another interesting matter in our view would be an agreement on confidence-building measures in outer space. This is another of those fields in which it might very well be relatively easy for the Conference to achieve an agreement in the short term. Instead of getting lost in technical discussions which do nothing to deter the militarization of outer space, we believe that the time has come to address a practical item on which valuable initiatives already exist which need to be reconsidered.

We also consider that it would be interesting in the agenda to examine the possibility of a protocol between the five nuclear Powers whereby they would renounce radiological weapons. My delegation believes that this subject was made unnecessarily complicated when new proposals were added to the original one, regardless of whether the approach was legitimate. Here we are talking about weapons which have never existed, but which might one day be produced. Therefore an agreement on this matter should be a priority matter for the five nuclear Powers, which could take into account certain concerns expressed by non-nuclear-weapon countries. With this approach we are sure that the negotiations would be simplified and greatly facilitated, without prejudice to consideration of this issue within the context of the Conference on Disarmament. At the end of this process, the other member States of the Conference would be called on to consider the protocol and endorse it, as appropriate, with a view to universal membership. Meanwhile it is understood that the important question of a ban on attacks against nuclear facilities should be the subject of a diplomatic conference within the framework of international humanitarian law, since in this particular case we would not really be talking about disarmament proper and it might therefore fall outside the field of competence of the CD.

Lastly, another important matter in our view is transparency in armaments. On this subject discussion is possible as the best means of defining areas in which the CD might make a practical contribution to the efforts of the United Nations General Assembly. We have in mind in particular the need to consider monitoring of the production of armaments and the transfer of dual-use technologies, for the very purpose of avoiding uncontrolled proliferation of such technologies to the detriment of regional security in particular. For Peru a curbing of production would be the logical counterpart of the monitoring of transfers, since it is production that lies at the root of the arms race.

An agenda of this kind in no way presupposes avoiding important subjects such as non-proliferation in all its aspects, inter alia. However, it seems to us that given its scale and implications, this subject is more properly addressed in the Disarmament Commission than in a negotiating forum.

(Mr. de Rivero, Peru)

We nurture the hope that the consultations you will be holding in the inter-sessional period, Mr. President, on the agenda and expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, will be crowned with success. Nevertheless, should this not prove possible, my delegation would remind you that for next year we might give thought to the designation of two special coordinators who, under the direction of the current President of the Conference, would be in a position to devote themselves exclusively to the search for solutions to these important questions. In the meantime, the temporary lack of agreement at the commencement of the 1993 session should not be a sufficient reason for maintaining the status quo, unless imagination and goodwill have once again vanished from this historic Council chamber.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Peru for his statement and for his words of encouragement in the task entrusted to me. I now give the floor to the representative of France, Ambassador Errera.

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, first of all I would like to say how delighted my delegation is to see presiding over the Conference the representative of a friendly country, one which has always been bound to France by close ties in all areas. Accept my warmest wishes for success in your important task, which you have taken up at a crucial point in the history of the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me also to repeat the tribute I paid to your distinguished predecessors, Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia, Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Semichi of Algeria. I would also like to welcome our new colleagues from Poland and Sri Lanka. Lastly, I would like to welcome the presence among us of the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs of Finland, Ambassador Karhilo, and to thank him especially for the support he kindly gave to the statement I made yesterday in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

I have asked for the floor in order to inform the Conference that on 24 August, in keeping with the decision announced by the President of the Republic during the summit-level meeting of the Security Council on 31 January last, France formally deposited with the Government of Mexico its instruments of ratification of Additional Protocol I to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This initiative reflects the importance which France attaches to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its resolve to make a contribution to the full implementation of that instrument. In this spirit we have taken note with satisfaction of the measures adopted by certain Latin American States in order to speed up the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. With reference to the process to amend the Treaty launched by those countries, it is of course up to all the sovereign States in that region to take a decision. We very much hope that consensus will emerge, thus making it possible for all the States in the region to accede to the Treaty once and for all. Together with other initiatives taken by the States of Latin America, such as the Mendoza and Cartagena declarations, the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco will be a new positive factor in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the strengthening of confidence and security in the region.

(Mr. Errera, France)

In ratifying Protocol I to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, France wishes to recall once again that the non-proliferation of arms of mass destruction remains an imperative for the international community, as was stressed in the declaration adopted at the summmit meeting of the Security Council on 31 January. It is in that spirit that on 3 August, France deposited its instruments of accession to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is in that spirit that at an earlier stage it signed Protocol II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which contains negative security assurances for the benefit of States parties, precisely because those States had made legally binding commitments in the field of non-proliferation. It is also in that spirit that it has undertaken to become an original signatory of the chemical weapons convention. And it is in that spirit that France will continue to contribute to the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in which all States, North and South, have a major interest, and which therefore requires joint action on our part. In this common endeavour, the Conference on Disarmament has an important role to play. Non-proliferation issues, we believe, already form part of the tasks of the Conference, in one way or another, and are among its priorities. It is up to us to confirm this determination, by practical actions, in our future work. It is clear that the links between disarmament and non-proliferation are becoming closer every day. Hence only we can decide that it should be in a multilateral context that progress will be accomplished, a broad consensus will appear and rules will be negotiated. We hope in this regard that the useful informal consultations undertaken at the initiative of our colleague from Mexico, Ambassador Marin Bosch, will produce the necessary decisions.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Errera for his kind words addressed to me and to my country. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Marín Bosch.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, please accept the appreciation of the Mexican delegation for the way in which you have been presiding over the work of this Conference. We asked for the floor in order to refer to the event which has just been announced by the distinguished representative of France - the deposit of the instrument of ratification of Additional Protocol I to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco. This completes one more stage, the second, in the long process of consolidating the status of military de-nuclearization in the region. The first of these stages ended in 1979 with the accession of the then Soviet Union to Additional Protocol II, in which the nuclear-weapon States undertake, inter alia, not to use or threaten to use such weapons against contracting parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. It was in the year 1979 that the French Government signed Additional Protocol I, which is open for accession by States outside the region having de jure or de facto international responsibility for territories situated in the zone of application of the Treaty. In that instrument those States undertake to apply the statute of de-nuclearization in such territories in respect of warlike purposes. The States in question are the United States,

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, as well as France. The Government of Mexico wishes to place on record its keen appreciation for the action just taken by the Government of France, a country which has so many historical, cultural and economic ties with our region.

As you will remember resolution 2286 (XXII) of 1967, the General Assembly stated that the Treaty of Tlatelolco "constitutes an event of historic significance in the efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote international peace and security". The Treaty itself states that the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is not an end in itself "but rather a means for achieving general and complete disarmament at a later stage". It is now for the States of the region to take the necessary steps to ensure the full implementation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco in their territories. Of the 33 independent States of the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, 24 are already parties to the Treaty; 2 have signed and ratified it, but without the waiver provided for in article 28; with the signature of the Treaty by Saint Lucia on 25 August this year, 4 States have signed but not yet ratified it, and 3 have not yet signed.

In this connection, the delegation of Mexico, as the representative of the depositary Government of the Treaty, wishes to inform this Conference that yesterday in Mexico City the General Conference of OPANAL, the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, began a special meeting to consider a series of amendments to the Treaty which the Mexican Government tabled for consideration by the other contracting parties. The amendments, which will be distributed in a working paper of this Conference, relate to articles 14, 15, 16, 19 and 20 of the Treaty and are the result of negotiations with the Governments of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, which have undertaken to accept the full and immediate application of the Treaty once the amendments have been favourably considered at the special meeting of the General Conference. The Mexican Government, it should be said, is convinced that the amendments do not modify the spirit of the Treaty in essential respects, but do make it possible to progress towards the common objective of bringing the Treaty fully into force. This, together with the announcement repeated recently by the Cuban Government that it is prepared to accede to the Treaty of Tlatelolco if other countries do likewise, is a clear display of the resolve of all countries of Latin America and Caribbean to ensure the consolidation of the regime of military de-nuclearization in the region. This year of 1992, the silver anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, has witnessed various events which mark significant steps towards such a consolidation. The States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco entertain the hope that the evidence of goodwill by other countries in the region will speedily result in practical actions such as that which we have welcomed today.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to convey to you the congratulations of the delegation of Egypt on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at a stage when the CD session

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

is close to its end, with the double responsibility of preparing and adopting its report. I would like to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation. I seize this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia, for the skilful and effective manner in which he steered the work of the CD during the tenure of his presidency. While I extend a warm welcome to our midst to Ambassador Goonetilleke of Sri Lanka and Ambassador Ludvik Dembinski of Poland, who have recently joined us in the CD, I regret the departure of three of our colleagues and express my best wishes to Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy and Ambassador Prakash Shah of India as all of them terminate successfully their mission and for their invaluable contributions to the deliberations in the Conference on Disarmament. I wish them all success in the assumption of their new responsibilities.

The Egyptian delegation has worked diligently among other delegations in order to elaborate a water-tight convention to ban chemical weapons. On this occasion I seize the opportunity to pay tribute to the contribution made by Ambassador von Wagner and the German delegation as the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons terminated its work late yesterday, 26 August, by adopting its report which will be transmitted later to the Conference. Egypt has always supported all measures designed to contribute to the promotion of international and regional stability and has always committed itself to engage in constructive negotiations to fulfil this objective. It is with this understanding that the delegation of Egypt, together with other delegations, have presented amendments to the draft convention in a constructive spirit with a view to enhancing the universality of the convention. Egypt has always attached great importance to including in the draft convention issues that it regards as vital to its national security and interests. We genuinely hoped that such concerns would have been included in the text of the draft convention. Allow me at this juncture to mention briefly some of these concerns that are momentous to us and that were made available in more detail in working paper CD/CW/WP.434 and reflected in the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee (CD/CW/WP.436). First, article II, particularly the problem of the wide-spectrum definition of chemical weapons. Second, article VIII, and in particular the imbalance in the regional representation in the executive council, especially the inequitable share reserved for the African grouping in the council. Third, article IX, and in particular the powers of the executive council as regards challenge inspection, and the Egyptian proposal to address possible abuse of challenge inspection. Fourth, article XI, as we were unable to get a clear-cut commitment in the convention that its implementation will not hamper the economic and technological development of the States parties.

Egypt participated actively in the negotiations on the CWC, and we hoped that it would achieve universal adherence by reflecting the legitimate sovereign rights and vital interests of all States in view of our need to live in peace and security and cooperate with other members of the international

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

community. We appreciate the goodwill of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador von Wagner, who provided clarification of some of the provisions of the draft convention. However, regarding his explanation on the definition of chemical weapons in article II, we find that it falls short of total clarity and complete satisfaction. On the other hand, my delegation is putting a question regarding the authoritative legal status of the Chairman's explanation in so far as the ambiguity of certain provisions and the clarity of others versus the text of the draft convention. However, the explanatory statement of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee is indicative of the complexity of the draft convention. In addition, the draft convention does not meet the requirement of providing full-scope security assurances to face the case of an aggression using chemical weapons against a State party to this convention; a legitimate requirement which should be studied in view of addressing it.

In spite of the said misgivings and concerns, my delegation will not stand in the way of a decision by the Conference on Disarmament to transmit the draft CWC to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly for consideration.

We believe that a good and balanced convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons is a step forward which enhances the implementation of President Mubarak's initiative of April 1990 that called for declaring the Middle East a region free of weapons of mass destruction under effective international control. The said initiative is intended to involve all weapons of mass destruction, namely, nuclear, chemical and biological. The draft chemical weapons convention, together with the non-proliferation Treaty and the biological weapons Convention, are considered to be the three pillars on which the said zone should be established. Hence, from the regional perspective, we cannot dissociate the CWC from the NPT and BWC. We have a strong conviction that all States in the region should bear equal, reciprocal and balanced obligations deriving from the above-mentioned three international instruments governing weapons of mass destruction all together. In this regard, I would like to recall the letter addressed by His Excellency Amre Moussa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 19 July 1991 (A/46/329) in which he enumerated basic elements for the promotion of international and regional stability and security. The said elements include, inter alia: first, a quantitative and qualitative balance between the military capabilities of all States in the region; and second, the accordance of priority to ridding the region of weapons of mass destruction, namely nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

In addition, on 5 July 1991, Egypt announced a series of additional ideas and proposals on the issue of regional disarmament in the Middle East. First, the major arms-producing States, and particularly the permanent members of the Security Council, as well as Israel, Iran and the Arab States, should deposit undertakings with the Security Council in which they clearly and unconditionally endorse the declaration of the Middle East as a region free of weapons of mass destruction and commit themselves not to take any steps or

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

measures which would run counter to or impede the attainment of that objective. Second, the arms-producing States and the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should step up their efforts to ensure that all Middle East nations which have not yet done so adhere to the NPT. Third, States of the Middle East which have not yet done so should declare their commitment not to use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, not to produce or acquire nuclear weapons or nuclear material suitable for military use and to dispose of any existing stocks of such material, and to accept the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards regime. Fourth, those States of the region which have not yet done so should declare their commitment to adhere to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, as well as the Convention concerning the prohibition of biological weapons of 1972, no later than the conclusion of the negotiations on the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons being conducted under CD auspices. Fifth, the Middle East States should declare their commitment to address measures relating to all forms of delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction. Sixth, the States of the region should approve the assignment to an organ of the United Nations or any other international organization of a role to be agreed upon in the verification of the agreements to be concluded in this regard.

The above-mentioned considerations also fall within the scope of the peace process currently under way since the Madrid Conference started aiming at restoring a comprehensive, just and final peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Ridding the region of all weapons of mass destruction through the adherence of all States in the Middle East to the NPT, CWC and BWC constitutes a positive contribution and one of the confidence-building measures which accelerate the peace process.

I would like to take the opportunity of having the floor today to speak in my capacity as Special Coordinator for item 8, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament", and item 9, "Transparency in armaments". I felt it would be appropriate to say a final word this year on these two items which the Conference entrusted me to steward, in the light of the paragraphs relating to these items to be inserted in the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament.

As this was my first time to fulfil the functions of a special coordinator in the Conference, allow me to take this opportunity to thank all delegations for their cooperation and goodwill which enabled me to complete my tasks in good time.

With respect to the "Comprehensive programme of disarmament" (item 8), the situation is clear. The Conference, working on the basis of the consensus rule, is bound to wait until there is general agreement when the time is ripe to continue negotiations on the programme. In this respect, the report reflects faithfully the situation in the Conference this year.

I should like here to express my appreciation for the close cooperation I received from the item coordinators for CPD, namely Señora Bauta Solés of Cuba, Mr. Dubuisson of Belgium and Mr. Gaspar of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, as well as Mr. Gu of China.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

Regarding transparency in armaments (item 9), the task went beyond the normal role of a special coordinator to include the chairing by me of the consultations in informal meetings of the Conference on the draft substantive paragraphs. It was particularly satisfying to me to achieve the mandate entrusted to me in this regard, knowing the importance the General Assembly will attach to the work of the Conference in 1992, as reflected in its annual report. I was particularly impressed by the amount of effort that delegations made on the item of transparency in armaments. With little time at our disposal, and the conflicting demands of the chemical weapons negotiations, the results achieved on this item went frankly beyond my expectations. The inscription of the new item on the agenda was not only a given event; the negotiations proved delicate, but, I believe, of definite value, as all points of view were clearly sounded. The five informal meetings held heard 23 speakers from members and non-members alike. The paragraphs devoted to this item which will be included in the annual report of the Conference genuinely reflect the discussions held in the Conference. There is a listing of the many topics raised and the varied proposals put forward, many of which were very specific. No attempt was made to reach agreement on any of them. They will give some indication for further consideration in the 1993 session.

In my personal view as Special Coordinator, the work this year was "a good start". Much remains to be done in order to focus in and define those areas in which the Conference can make a genuine contribution to increasing openness and transparency among States in the field of arms transfers. The Conference has taken its first step in 1992. Next year will surely prove to be an interesting year in the Conference's work on this subject. By next year we shall have available the report of the panel of governmental technical experts, which will be presented to the forty-seventh General Assembly. I recall also that the secretariat will be compiling a document containing measures of transparency that have been adopted at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. I remind delegations to bring to the attention of the secretariat any measures that they have identified which they would want to appear in that document. Here again I would like to express my appreciation and thanks for the close cooperation I received from the coordinators of the TIA item, namely Mr. Adekeye of Nigeria, Mr. Anastassov of Bulgaria, Mr. Finaud of France and Mr. Liu of China.

I should also like to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Berastegui, and his competent staff, especially Mr. Michael Cassandra and Ms. Johnston, for their efforts to supply us expeditiously with documents, papers and other material we worked on. To the interpreters and translators and all conference staff also goes my gratitude for the smooth running of the discussions within the informal meetings of the Conference I have chaired.

With these few words I shall end this part of my statement as Special Coordinator for items 8 and 9.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

In conclusion, as my colleague, Counsellor Dr. Mahmoud Karem, is going to leave us to go back to Cairo in a few days to assume the responsibility of heading the Division of Disarmament in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I would like to pay a special tribute to him and to express my appreciation for his contributions in the deliberations on various items in the Conference on Disarmament. On the other hand, I was compensated by an able colleague, Counsellor Mrs. Fatma Hussein, who joined the Egyptian Mission recently and who will work with me in disarmament affairs. I am sure that we will benefit from her experience in our future work. She was in charge of disarmament questions in the Foreign Ministry and, before that, in Vienna she had gained experience from her work with IAEA.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for the statements you have just made and the kind words you addressed to the Chair. I would also like to thank Dr. Karem, who has served the Conference on two occasions now with great efficiency. We are sure that he will stay in contact with us because the duties he is to take up in Cairo relate to disarmament and he will certainly maintain close links with us. We also welcome your colleague who is to replace him.

Since Ambassador Zahran spoke during his statement in his capacity as Special Coordinator for agenda item 8, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament", and item 9, "Transparency in armaments", I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on the fine work accomplished on those two agenda items. As he emphasized himself, at the request of the President Ambassador Zahran went beyond the traditional functions of a special coordinator on item 9 and oversaw the preparation of the draft substantive paragraphs. I am convinced that these paragraphs represent an invaluable contribution to the content of the annual report and that they will be followed with great attention by the General Assembly. Once again, Mr. Ambassador, wholehearted thanks for what you have done.

I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Kamal.

Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce my report on the informal open-ended consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament, circulated as document CD/WP.435.

Despite the relatively short time that the Conference was able to devote to this exercise during the current session, agreement has emerged on important areas, such as the need for brevity in report writing, the possible reduction of plenary meetings, the organization of work of ad hoc committees, the tenure of the presidency, the possibility of avoiding unnecessary duplication in documentation, and the identification of possible future courses of action on the agenda and membership of the Conference. In a happy departure from past practice, observer delegations were able to attend the informal open-ended consultations on improved and effective functioning this year for the first time.

The exercise has thus proved its utility once again in the ongoing and constant search of the Conference for its self-improvement.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you very much, Ambassador Kamal, for introducing your report, which, as you reminded us, has been distributed as CD/WP.435. Thank you also for your kind words, and I would like to congratulate you on the work accomplished with consistent efficiency over the three years in which you have been entrusted with this topic. I cannot say that I am the greatest beneficiary of this exercise because I have been entrusted with a most delicate mission, but you are not entirely responsible for that. We will come back to this report at the end of the meeting. I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco, Ambassador Benhima.

Mr. BENHIMA (Morocco) (translated from French): I would like to tell you, Mr. President, how pleased the delegation of Morocco is to congratulate you on taking over the Chair at a time when the Conference on Disarmament is about to close a particularly active session. I am sure that thanks to your outstanding qualities, you will guide our final efforts to a happy outcome. To your predecessors Ambassadors Moritán and O'Sullivan I would like to express our gratitude for their valuable contributions. It is also with genuine pleasure that I welcome the Under-Secretary of State, Ambassador Karhilo, whose devotion to his work at the Paris Conference in January 1990 left us with a memory of a man of greatly appreciated professional and human abilities.

For many years the procrastination in the Conference gave rise to doubts as to its effectiveness and raised questions concerning its future. The international climate prevailing at that time could account for its marginalization and the prolonged lack of progress in its work. Today, thanks to intensive efforts in the negotiations on chemical weapons, we are ready to restore the credibility of the Conference as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The mandate entrusted to it is about to be crowned by the approval of the draft convention. This result, which we welcome, creates new conditions that give grounds for the hopes that we are entitled to place in the Conference's ability to take the further steps specified in the terms of reference with which it had been entrusted.

Faithful to a tradition firmly rooted in its history and in its geo-political position at the point of confluence of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and also faithful to its commitments, the Kingdom of Morocco has always displayed its support for disarmament by acceding to the relevant conventions. This commitment was reaffirmed by His Majesty King Hassan II at the summit meeting of the Security Council held on 31 January last. I quote:

> "The progress achieved in the nuclear sphere should not prevent us from redoubling our joint efforts to ensure the success of the Geneva negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons and their destruction in order to rid ourselves of a devastating weapon that constitutes a negation of civilization and its noble human values. We believe that disarmament will have no true significance unless it engenders in the countries of the North the dynamics of cooperation with the countries of the South to help the latter to free themselves from underdevelopment.

(Mr. Benhima, Morocco)

Moreover, we believe in the relevance of the trend to establish a link between peace and disarmament. However, we regret that this trend fails to establish a link between peace and progress, despite the closeness of this link."

Careful scrutiny of the main provisions of the draft convention and its annexes highlights imperfections and gaps despite the care taken to fill the gaps and meet the expectations of all sides. However, an overall assessment of the draft shows that it constitutes a compromise among the concerns which had been expressed. My delegation repeats its hope that the improvements introduced will make it possible to convince those who still doubt, so as to grant the convention the universal support that will guarantee the security of all States acceding to it, safeguard their legitimate interests, create the best conditions possible for implementation in a context of transparency and ensure unhindered cooperation for the development of the chemical industry for peaceful purposes. Given the importance of the chemical industry in its economy, because of the volume of production and exports, Morocco will ensure that it contributes to the executive council in the application of the provisions relating to trade in non-prohibited chemicals, and the relevant production technologies.

The success of the Conference in the field of chemical weapons deserves to be consolidated. To do this, we must, without delay, add tangible progress in the other areas within the mandate of the Conference, in particular in the nuclear field. This is a requirement that we have to meet all the more speedily as the international community keeps calling on us to do so. In this context, Morocco welcomes the recent decisions adopted by France, China and South Africa, announcing their accession to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty. These initiatives, as well as the move by the United States to cut back on its nuclear tests, are along the right lines and will henceforth allow the Conference to view optimistically the prospect of a total ban on nuclear testing as a decisive step towards nuclear disarmament. We have always welcomed with relief the agreements reached by the two main nuclear Powers and their initiatives to bring about a substantial reduction in their arsenals. However, we continue to believe that only nuclear disarmament will put an end to the threats cast over the whole of mankind by this type of weapon. In this regard, the cessation of nuclear tests constitutes a high-priority objective. We express the hope that at its very next session, the Conference on Disarmament will give the Ad Hoc Committee a precise mandate to achieve this aim. The same can be said for the subject of negative security assurances, which remain fundamental for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, who continually call for legally binding rules to be drawn up in this area. We hope that all the nuclear Powers that are parties to the non-proliferation Treaty will contribute to the development of a process leading towards this objective. The recent declarations made by France on this subject give us grounds for satisfaction.

(Mr. Benhima, Morocco)

Finally, it seems essential for the Conference to get down to taking the appropriate steps to safeguard outer space from any form of militarization. The Conference must identify appropriate means to remedy the legal vacuum affecting the use of space. The Ad Hoc Committee should be provided with a clear mandate to negotiate a new instrument to make it possible to define conditions for the use of outer space for purely peaceful purposes.

We welcome the fact that an innovative debate has now begun within our Conference on such important issues as the revision of the agenda or the establishment of new machinery which would strengthen the effectiveness of the Conference and its organs. In the view of my delegation, the Conference should, first and foremost, establish priorities on matters where progress is essential in order to allay the concerns of the international community. It would be tragic if the Conference were to fall back into lethargy after having achieved breakthroughs because we have no right to dash the renewed hopes in the ability of the sole multilateral negotiating body to translate the security needs of the international community into reality.

Today we are approaching the closure of an exceptional session of the Conference of Disarmament. It might be described as the session of renewal and hope. Morocco, which paid a heavy tribute to peace during the two world wars which caused so much bloodshed in Europe, attaches a high price to its preservation. Comprehensive and general disarmament is the price to be paid.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you, Ambassador Benhima, for your statement and for the kind words you addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Norway, Ambassador Skogmo.

Mr. SKOGMO (Norway): First of all, let me congratulate Ambassador Servais on his appointment to the important function of President of the Conference on Disarmament. This is a most important period for the Conference. We feel certain that Ambassador Servais will conduct the Conference safely through the concluding days of the present session and in the inter-sessional period, when he has been tasked with the conduct of consultations on important issues.

Permit me briefly to introduce a new Norwegian contribution on chemical weapons, document CD/1169, distributed today, entitled "Transport of samples containing chemical warfare agents by air". This working paper is part of a series of research reports related to the verification of a CW convention submitted by Norway since 1982. This may be the last contribution we are making on the CW issue to the Conference on Disarmament here in Geneva, but I would like to assure members of the Conference of our continued intention to work on issues that would strengthen the CW when the focus of this work is shifted to the new headquarters of the new organization in The Hague.

The report we are introducing here today deals with the practical problems faced by those who, as a consequence of the CW convention, soon may have to transport scheduled CW compounds by air freight. Norwegian experts

(Mr. Skogmo, Norway)

have conducted trial shipments which are further described in the report. We hope that the experience we have gained in our trials may prove useful to other parties to the convention.

I could not miss this opportunity to say a few words on the convention that is about to be launched as the first international legal instrument negotiated by the Conference on Disarmament. Its importance for the international standing of this body cannot be exaggerated. The CW convention offers a universal instrument for removing vast quantities of a particularly abhorrent category of weapons. It provides a new basis for building confidence between nations. The untiring efforts of Ambassador von Wagner and his team command our respect and admiration. His efforts and the hard work of the Ad Hoc Committee were crowned with success last night. We all rejoice in this outcome.

A compromise text is seldom perfect, and the text before us is certainly no exception. The verification requirements could in our view, have been stronger. In spite of its shortcomings, my Government firmly believes that the treaty should go forward from the Conference on Disarmament for signature and that it deserves global adherence. The international community cannot wait another decade for the Conference on Disarmament to sort out residual national differences. The result after new rounds of negotiations would probably not be better than the product before us now.

After concluding the CW negotiations, the time is now ripe for the Conference on Disarmament to embark on a substantial discussion of the future of the Conference, including both its agenda and its structure. Norway sees a continued need for a multilateral negotiating body for global arms control agreements, building on regional achievements, but with the overriding aim of creating increased global security. You have all received an experts' study on a nuclear test ban, CD/1167, produced on the initiative of the Norwegian Foreign Minister. We hope that this study will provide food for thought, and that it demonstrates both the urgency and the practicability of addressing the issue of a nuclear test ban in the Conference on Disarmament. The experts' study calls for a nuclear-test-ban treaty by 1995. The CD has also important tasks ahead of it concerning non-proliferation issues, transparency in armaments, as well as other relevant confidence-building measures of a global nature.

The Conference on Disarmament is now also considering its working methods and composition. We are glad to note the report which is on our tables today from the Chairman of the open-ended consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the CD, which observes that there is now general agreement that attention should be focused both on the agenda and membership of the Conference. Norway has actively participated in an observer capacity in the work of the CD. Since 1986 we have been the endorsed Western Group candidate for membership, and we hope that the decision to expand the Conference on Disarmament can now finally be implemented without further delay.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Norway for his words of encouragement and the statement he has just made. I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba, Ambassador Pérez Novoa.

Mr. PEREZ NOVOA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment to the post of President of the Conference on Disarmament. You are occupying the Chair at a difficult time in our work, but I am sure that with your skill and experience you will see the work you have been assigned to a successful conclusion. Once again, on behalf of my delegation, I should like to express appreciation for the excellent work performed by your predecessor in the Chair.

The Cuban delegation listened carefully to the statement made by the Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Miguel Marín Bosch, in which he informed the Conference on Disarmament of the conclusion of the negotiations that had been under way for a number of months with a view to amending the present text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. As you know, at the beginning of this year, the Governments of Argentina, Brazil and Chile presented a set of amendments to articles 14, 15, 16, 19 and 20 of the Treaty, in order to adapt the text to the new situation to be found in our region as a result of developments in the nuclear field in Brazil and in Argentina. Our Government, which has been following the course of the negotiations since their commencement, had already informed the secretariat of OPANAL and the Governments of the aforementioned countries that the amendments they had tabled were acceptable to Cuba, although this did not denote any change in Cuba's position with respect to the Treaty in question, as set forth by our Government in the person of President Fidel Castro during the Ibero-American summit of heads of State and government held in the city of Guadalajara in July 1991, and recently reiterated by the Cuban Foreign Ministry. On all those occasions it was stressed that, although the reasons which had so far prevented Cuba from acceding to the Treaty of Tlatelolco still applied, out of concern for Latin American unity Cuba would sign the Treaty once all States in the region had assumed their obligations thereunder. At this meeting of the Conference on Disarmament, I wish to re-emphasize that the position of my Government, as expressed by President Fidel Castro in Guadalajara, remains unalterable.

My delegation takes note of the statement made by the distinguished representative of France, announcing to this Conference his Government's ratification of Protocol I to the Treaty of Tlatelolco on 24 August of this year. These steps eliminate existing obstacles to the entry into force of this international instrument for the entire region within the shortest possible time.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for the words of encouragement and the statement you have just made. I now see that the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Mashhadi, has asked for the floor.

Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, my delegation is happy to see you chairing our work in the Conference on Disarmament. We indeed need a President of your calibre to help us arrive at a successful conclusion of our work for the year 1992.

The work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons practically came to an end yesterday, 26 August. My delegation acknowledges with great thanks and appreciation the relentless and meticulous work done by Ambassador von Wagner, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, as well as his delegation. My delegation will seize another opportunity in the future to express its views on the text of the draft convention. The reason I have asked for the floor today is that pursuant to the statement made by my Ambassador on 21 August 1992 in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and also in the light of the discussions which have been made on article VIII, I have been instructed by my Government to make the following statement.

The Islamic Republic of Iran will agree to the transmission of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and its appendix to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly for its consideration. It, however, rejects totally the inclusion and transmission of provisions dealing with the composition of the executive council in its present form in article VIII to the United Nations General Assembly. This objection is to the content of the text which grants privileged seats to more than a third of the members of the executive council. States parties must have an equal chance to serve on the executive council and no country should have special privileges. Iran also opposes the procedure which led to the appearance of the text as it is. The negotiations on the composition of the executive council were held in a non-transparent manner by a few countries to get privileges at the cost of others. We have never received an explanation or justification for example why four countries should receive special treatment and be courted with special privileges in the Asian region. The Islamic Republic of Iran cannot agree to such discrimination.

The PRESIDENT: (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Mashhadi. We have taken note of your statement and I thank you personally for your words of encouragement. Now I have as the last speaker on my list Dr. Gaspar, who will speak on behalf of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic.

Mr. GASPAR (Czechoslovakia): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to express my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you presiding over our work at the Conference in its final phase of the 1992 session. Upon instructions from my capital, I would like to make the following brief statement.

The delegation of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic associates itself with the intervention made by Ambassador Errera of France at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons yesterday, 26 August 1992.

(Mr. Gaspar, Czechoslovakia)

I would request you, Mr. President, to reflect this position of my delegation in the official records of the Conference. Finally, I also wish to join those speakers who expressed appreciation and gratitude for the work of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador von Wagner, and his team, which led us to the successful conclusion of the negotiations on the text of the chemical weapons convention.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you, Dr. Gaspar, for your words addressed to me and to Ambassador von Wagner. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the delegations that have taken the floor to say how much they admired the activities and the way Ambassador von Wagner guided the work of the chemical weapons Committee. I do not think this is the last time we will have occasion to speak of the matter.

We have now reached the end of the list of speakers. First of all, is there any delegation that wishes to speak? I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Spain.

Mr. PEREZ-VILLANUEVA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): Since I am taking the floor for the first time in this room under your Presidency, Sir, allow me to express my pleasure, my satisfaction, at being able to work under your presidency, under your stimulus, knowing your virtues and your effectiveness, from which your natural modesty, which only does you credit, in no way detracts.

Today I wish to address a few words to this meeting and those present here, members of the Conference or participating non-members, as we have decided to call this new category, simply to refer to something which my country and my Government regard as important in connection with the historic step we took yesterday in concluding, in the Conference on Disarmament and in the Committee on Chemical Weapons, the negotiations on that very category of weapons, after, if my count is not incorrect, 16 years of negotiations. I should like, before delving more into this subject, and with the few words I will venture to address to them, to express my thanks and the thanks of my Government to Ambassador Adolf von Wagner and equally so to his delegation, whose personal sacrifices I have observed over recent months, whose commitment, perseverance and brilliant professional skills have helped to secure the splendid result which we achieved yesterday.

Upon instructions from my Government I should like to state formally before this plenary that Spain supports, without any restrictions, the outcome of the negotiations on the treaty prohibiting chemical weapons, as embodied in the latest version of document WP/400/Rev.2. Consequently Spain will actively cooperate in the successive steps involving this instrument, in order to secure, within the speediest possible time, if not universal accession, then truly broad and representative accession by all the countries of the world, the civilized world, which hope to rid themselves of a particularly repellent category of weapons. Spain, I repeat, will actively cooperate in the practical matter of the start-up of the permanent organization established under the treaty, and will cooperate in terms of the human resources required, as well as any financial resources stemming from its participation.

(Mr. Pérez-Villanueva, Spain)

I would also like to express a feeling of concern experienced by my Government at the results obtained and reflected in the text of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee to the Conference on Disarmament. I am of course referring to the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, whose proceedings were concluded yesterday. This is a concern which I venture to express in this body in view of the fact that in the Ad Hoc Committee a non-member country, an observer country, does not as far as I know, have an opportunity to place on record its support for the positions of others. Therefore I venture to express before you Spain's concern at a new development - the reflection in a final report of the work of an ad hoc committee, and furthermore an ad hoc committee with a result of this nature, of an enormous, I would say disproportionate, number of country statements. Our concern refers, is founded, on the fact that we are not too clear about the significance that may derive from such a number of country statements in a report of this kind.

Our concern is based on legal considerations. We consider that these country statements are not reservations; if they are country reservations we have a serious problem on our hands, since they would be directly in conflict with the text of the treaty on chemical weapons, and if, as I hope, they are not country reservations, in any event they can be regarded as a body of legal doctrine which tomorrow, if necessary, would have to be employed to interpret unclear provisions in a text of this kind, and it is a particularly complex text. But there are political reasons for which my country and my Government consider that the report of the Committee on Chemical Weapons gives grounds for some concern. There are political reasons because on reading all of the document, and given the presence and the content of this large number of country statements, the resulting impression is a disheartening one, if you will allow me the word. We have arrived at what is truly a text of historic significance, with an extraordinarily complex verification system that many of us hope will prove effective, we have taken a truly significant step forward, which will probably come to be a milestone in the long history of disarmament and arms control negotiations, and the final result when you read the report is that there is an excessive reluctance on the part of those very countries which have taken part in the negotiations and have participated actively in the negotiations over a particularly lengthy period of time.

Bearing in mind this concern, my country would like to emphasize that it fully subscribes to the clarfication formulated by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom within the Committee on Chemical Weapons itself to the effect that none of the country statements to be found in the final document constitutes an alternative version or a binding element for the interpretation of the document. Consequently, these country statements have no more standing than that conferred on them by the fact that they convey the national position of a country. My Government also wishes to express, and does so through me, our support for the interpretation that the French delegation formulated yesterday, concerning its understanding of the results and the consequences of the text arrived at after such lengthy negotiations, which reflects the

(Mr. Pérez-Villanueva, Spain)

agreement on chemical weapons as set forth in the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee. That is what I wished to say before this plenary today, Sir. I thank you for your patience and interest and reiterate that at all events, from now onwards, until the moment when the opening of the conference for the signature and ratification of this treaty occurs, in Paris it would seem, my country will devote all its resources, or at least those at its disposal, to encourage the fullest possible adherence to this instrument.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for your words of encouragement and the statement you have just made, which will be duly taken into account in accordance with the rules and procedures of our Conference. I now have on my list the representative of Turkey, who had asked for the floor. I would like at this stage, not in order to urge him to be very brief, but given the late hour and the business remaining on the agenda, I would like succeeding speakers to display as much restraint as possible so that we can finish in due time.

Mr. ARAR (Turkey) (translated from French): Yesterday, in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, the French delegation made a statement on the text of the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, manufacture, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Several delegations associated themselves with that statement. Furthermore, during the most recent meetings of the Committee, certain delegations expressed their feelings on the draft and requested that their statements be published in the report which the Conference is going to endorse. As far as Turkey is concerned I wish to state that, very naturally, my country continues to feel firmly attached to the final communiqué of the meeting of the North Atlantic Council held at ministerial level in Turnberry in the United Kingdom on 7 and 8 June 1990. This communiqué was in fact published as a CD document with the number CD/1006. With your permission I would like to quote paragraph 6 of that communiqué, which relates specifically to chemical weapons:

> "We believe the United States-Soviet agreement on reducing chemical weapons stockpiles will provide great impetus towards the earliest possible conclusion of the convention for an effectively verifiable, global and comprehensive ban on chemical weapons now being negotiated, which remains our goal. All allies hereby state their intention to be among the original signatories to the convention and to promote its early entry into force. We call on all other States to undertake a similar commitment. We reaffirm our determination to work to prevent the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons and of missiles capable of carrying such weapons."

Since work on the draft convention has just been completed, we believe that the second part of the paragraph relating to the intention of the allies to be among the original signatories and the call to all other States to undertake a similar commitment remains valid. This explains my delegation's position.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Thank you. I am all the more alive to what you have said as I myself helped in the drafting of the Turnberry declaration, and I take a certain pleasure in hearing it repeated here. I would now like to give the floor to the last speaker I have on my list, the distinguished representative of Austria.

Mr. GEHR (Austria) (translated from French): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to associate myself personally with the congratulations which the Ambassador of Austria, Professor Winfried Lang, extended to you in his last statement in the plenary. Having taken part in the consultations conducted by Ambassador Kamal on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament, and having read the report on the subject distributed as document CD/WP.435, I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction that in future you will be in charge of the consultations on the future of both the agenda and the membership of the Conference, a future which has been opened up, inter alia, by the eclipse of the rigid East-West dialectic. In this context the Austrian delegation would like to state expressly here its great interest in this work.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank you for your words of encouragement and your support for the report of the Chairman of the open-ended consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. I think that I can close the list of speakers by giving the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. ROMERO (Chile) (translated from Spanish): My delegation has already had occasion to congratulate you, Sir, on taking up the post of President of this Conference. Today I would just like to put on record the effective way you have been guiding the debate in it.

I asked for the floor to refer to the report presented today by Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan on the consultations carried out to improve the effective functioning of this Conference. In this regard, I wish to associate myself with what has been said today by other observer delegations to the effect that they have noted with satisfaction the fact that you, Sir, assisted by the next President and the Secretary-General, will be holding consultations during the inter-sessional period on questions relating to the restructuring of the agenda and the expansion of the membership of this Conference and that in this process you are also going to involve the observer delegations. We think that this will be a step of great importance since in this very plenary my delegation has expressed its views on the agenda and membership on several occasions. It is for that reason that I can inform you that the Chilean delegation is prepared to discuss these important issues with you, Sir, whenever you feel it appropriate.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Chile for his kind words of encouragement. If there are no other speakers wishing to take the floor, I would like to move on to other matters and to try to deal with them before the 1 p.m. deadline.

(The President)

Further to the suggestion made by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events in paragraph 14 of the Group's progress report, under the symbol CD/1163, that a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency should be invited to participate in the Group's next session next February, the draft of a letter from the President to the Director General of the Agency was distributed on Tuesday at the meeting of coordinators and China. It was agreed that if no objections were raised before this plenary meeting, the letter would be sent as drafted. This is indeed the case and I shall therefore proceed as planned.

I would now like to invite the Conference to take note, with appreciation of course, of the report which was introduced to us by Ambassador Kamal in his capacity as Chairman of the informal open-ended consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, the text of which has been issued as CD/WP.435. If there are no objections, I will consider the report adopted.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Regarding this document CD/WP.435, I announced during the consultations on the drafting of substantive paragraphs last Tuesday that the recommendations contained in this report had been faithfully reflected in the substantive paragraphs on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, which have been distributed under the symbol CD/WP.436. I had proposed that if the secretariat had received no objections or comments from delegations before 10 a.m. on Wednesday, the text would be included in the draft annual report. Since it had received no comments from delegations by then, the secretariat will proceed as indicated above.

I would now like to take stock of the worrying situation with regard to the drafting of our annual report to the General Assembly (CD/WP.428). The secretariat is now actively engaged in preparing revision 1 of this document, which will contain the following items. First, the technical parts of the report, originally distributed as document CD/WP.428. Second, all the paragraphs on the items on the agenda on which the Conference did not set up subsidiary bodies, namely items 1, 2 and 3, part of item 7 and items 8 and 9. Third, consideration of the question relating to the request made by the General Assembly in resolution 44/116 O, concerning the seabed Treaty. Fourth, paragraphs on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, distributed by the secretariat last Tuesday. We will therefore be using document CD/WP.428/Rev.1 for the second reading of the draft report at an informal meeting, for which unfortunately I cannot set a date for you now, but about which I will keep all delegations informed. The difficulty has arisen from the fact that, contrary to what Ambassador Berasategui promised the technical services and the secretariat at the beginning of the third part of the session, that is on 20 July, that progress would be made on the non-chemical items so that the end of this last part of the session could be given over entirely to problems related to the chemical weapons convention,

(The President)

unfortunately that has not been the case because it was only on the morning of the day before yesterday that we were able to resolve the delicate pending issues on several items on the agenda. Having said that, there was therefore an overload for the technical services, both in editing and in translation, with the result that these services are absolutely unable to give me a precise date for the completion of their work. But naturally they are going to do their utmost to ensure that this happens as soon as possible.

That explanation was perhaps a little long, but was necessary in order to explain the uncertain situation I am in concerning the date for the convening of this second reading, which will take place as soon as possible and in any case, of course, before the last plenary meeting, when we will adopt the report. The reports of the subsidiary bodies, which will be an integral part of the Conference's report to the General Assembly, will be added by the secretariat as usual immediately after the draft report has been adopted, during the finalization of the official text which will be circulated as an official Conference document and sent to the United Nations General Assembly.

Before I adjourn this meeting I would like to inform you that we have not distributed a timetable for next week because we are planning only one plenary meeting on Thursday, 3 September, and I would remind you that there will also be an informal meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons on Wednesday, 2 September at 3 p.m., a quite informal meeting - have no fears that we will be reopening the debate on the content of the report. I think there will be an exchange of views on the preparatory committee. I would also remind you that there will be an informal meeting devoted, as I informed you, to the second reading of the draft annual report at the earliest date that can physically be arranged.

As we have come to the end of the agenda, I will adjourn the meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 3 September at 10 a.m. Since it is probably going to be a long one, I invite you all to be here at 10 o'clock sharp.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.